



### 2014-2015 Hunting Season

Texas is home to four national forests that stretch from the urban landscape of Houston to the Louisiana border, and to two national grasslands located north of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

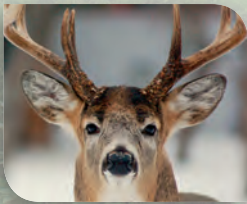
White-tailed deer is the game of choice in Texas and there’s no better place to bag that trophy buck than in the national forests and grasslands.

From mid-September to the end of January is prime hunting season and all hunters and those accompanying them must wear daylight fluorescent orange at any time when hunting, except when hunting turkey or migratory birds.

A minimum of 400 square inches of fluorescent orange must be visible (144 square inches on both the chest and back, and a daylight fluorescent orange cap or hat.)

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## Keep Safety in Mind When Hunting

As gun deer hunting season begins, U.S. Forest Service officials are reminding hunters of guidelines designed to make their hunting trips to national forests and grasslands safe and enjoyable, while sustaining the health of the forests.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use on the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas is restricted, according to Patrol Captain Chris Crain.

“OHV use on the National Forests is limited to designated routes, and the only such designation is the 85-mile multiple-use trail in the Sam Houston National Forest,” Crain said. “Cross-country and off-road use of motorized vehicles of any type is prohibited.”

This rule stems from a 2005 directive from the chief of the Forest Service that required each national forest and grassland to designate specific roads, trails and areas open to motor vehicle use. The National Forests and Grasslands in Texas, after public participation through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision-making process, implements the Travel Management Rule throughout the forests and grasslands.

“In the right places, and managed carefully, motor vehicles are an appropriate use of national forests. However, if not managed carefully, motorized recreation can damage both the land and the resources that visitors come to enjoy,” Crain said. “Each year millions of off-highway vehicles travel America’s national forests legally and sensibly on designated roads and trails. A small, but growing number of irresponsible OHV users are threatening the health of all national forests by driving far off-trail and damaging fragile plants, wetlands and ecosystems.”

Operating a motor vehicle on National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails and in areas on National Forest System lands carries a greater responsibility than driving a vehicle on a city street. Not only must the operators know and follow all applicable traffic laws, but they need to show concern for the environment as well as other forest users.

The misuse of motor vehicles are subject to state traffic law, including state requirements for licensing, registration and operation of the vehicle.

Motor vehicle use, especially off-highway vehicle use, involves inherent risks that may cause property damage, serious injury and possibly death.

Riders should drive cautiously and anticipate rough surfaces and features such as mud, vegetation and water crossings common to remote driving conditions.

Motor vehicle operators should take care at all times to protect themselves and those under their responsibility.

Much of the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas are remote, and medical assistance may not be readily available. Cellular phones do not work in many areas of the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas. Operators should take adequate food, water, first aid supplies and other equipment appropriate for the conditions and expected weather.

Always remember to respect private land. Protect your privilege. Stay on designated roads and trails and in designated areas.

To help visitors to the national forests and grasslands know which roads are open to vehicular traffic, the forest service has available a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) showing where motorized vehicle use is allowed on the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas, by vehicle type and season of use. This will be of particular interest to hunters who use forest service roads to retrieve game.

Motorized Vehicle Use Maps are posted on the website: [www.fs.usda.gov/texas/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/texas/) and the maps are also available at the Supervisor’s Office and Ranger Offices.

Comments about the MVUM or any other issues concerning the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas are welcome and can be e-mailed to: [comments-southern-texas@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-texas@fs.fed.us).

In the subject line, please note the topic you are commenting on.

### Watch Out for Falling Trees

- Dead trees create a hazard in the forest.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Trees can fall without warning.
- Park vehicles and place tents in areas where they will not be hit if a tree falls.
- Remember, your safety is your responsibility.





### Antlerless Deer Permits from TPWD

Each year, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) inventories deer populations in national forests and adjacent lands. As needed, the department includes antlerless deer in the annual harvest to seek a balanced population.

Designated areas and the number of permits issued vary from year to year and the number of requests usually exceeds the number of permits available.

Hunting antlerless deer in the national forests in Texas is conducted only within Wildlife Management Areas and only by permit.

TPWD will conduct Antlerless Deer permit applications and selections through an on-line application process. Application will no longer be accepted by mail or email.

For more information on Antlerless Deer Permits, contact TPWD at [www.tpwd.texas.gov/drawn hunts](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/drawn hunts) or call TPWD at 936-569-8547.

### Game in the Forest

Many game species find favorable habitat in the national forests where timber stands range from recently harvested areas to stands more than 100 years old.

The breaks or “edges” created where different aged stands meet are preferred by many species; so, the observant sportsman learns to recognize stand characteristics and the types of game animals to be found in them.



### Where to Find Birds

Mourning doves prefer to feed in areas of open, bare ground with scattered stands of seed-producing weeds. Such conditions are found in recently logged stands where disturbed soil encourages weed growth. Bobwhite quail feed in these same stands and in stands up to five years after cutting, where grassy-weedy vegetation has grown and provides cover. Quail also use adjacent older timber stands for escape cover from predators and hunters.

Woodcock are a fairly common but lightly-hunted winter visitor to the national forests. They prefer dense thickets for protection, but can be found in early morning and late evening feeding in the same young stands as quail.

Most waterfowl hunting associated with the national forests is on the larger reservoirs that lie within or adjacent to them. Sam Rayburn Reservoir is managed by the Corps of Engineers, Toledo Bend Reservoir is managed by Sabine River Authority, and Lake Conroe is under management of the San Jacinto River Authority. Contact those agencies concerning use of their waters, including the construction of hunting blinds. Some waterfowl hunting is available in river bottoms during high water periods.

### Turkey Hunting

The U.S. Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the National Wild Turkey Federation are working cooperatively in a restocking program to reintroduce wild turkeys on national forest lands.

The Caddo National Grasslands allow shotgun-only hunting in the spring. The LBJ National Grasslands has a fall and spring season for the Rio Grande turkey. Check the Texas Parks and Wildlife hunting guide for counties in the national forests that allow spring hunting.

Turkeys usually can be found in older timber stands that have some hardwoods, but they also need younger stands, especially during the breeding and brood-rearing seasons.

### Small Animals

Cottontail rabbits can be found in the same habitat as quail. Gray squirrels and fox squirrels are the most popular small game animals in the national forests. Gray squirrels prefer stands of bottomland hardwoods 40 years of age or older. The trees in gray squirrel habitat must be old enough to produce consistent crops of acorns and similar food. Most major rivers and creeks that flow through the national forest have these hardwood stands within their floodplains.

Fox squirrels also prefer older age timber stands; however, they are generally found in the transition zone between the bottomlands and uplands where there is a mix of hardwood and pine, similar to turkey habitat. They can also be found in older pine stands that contain scattered nut-producing trees.

### Large Animals

Deer hunting is a challenging sport and white-tailed deer can be found throughout the national forests. Deer are true edge species and do best where there is a mix of stands of various ages. The season will sometimes determine where you can find small concentrations of deer, such as in hardwood stands during acorn fall.

Small, scattered populations of wild or feral hogs live in the national forests. Although they are not classified as game animals, they provide some limited hunting opportunities, usually incidental to other types of hunting. Hogs are usually found in bottomlands.



### Deer Stands

Deer stands may be used in the national forests and grasslands, but they must be portable and cannot be of a type that will deface or harm trees. Deer stands must be removed within 72 hours of placing one in the general forest or in a Wildlife Management Area. Since the forests and grasslands are open to public hunting, hunters cannot maintain exclusive rights to a hunting area.

### Fishing

The national forests and grasslands provide fishing opportunities on numerous ponds and lakes, many of which are regularly stocked with fish. Sam Rayburn Reservoir, Toledo Bend Reservoir and Lake Conroe are known for excellent fishing but there are many other fine lakes to challenge anglers. Some of the larger lakes in the national forests include Red Hill, Ratcliff, Boykin Springs and Double Lake. In the national grasslands, Coffee Mill, Crockett, Fannin, Cottonwood and Black Creek Lake are favorites. Windmill Lake on the LBJ Grasslands is designated a fly fishing only lake. Most of these lakes also have developed recreation areas.

Texas fishing regulations and license requirements apply to all these waters.

### Game on the Grasslands

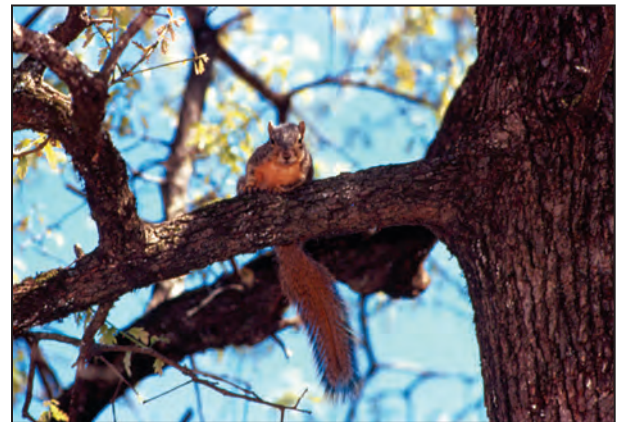
The national grasslands provide favorable habitat for some of the small game animals found in the national forests. There is no commercial timber harvesting on the grasslands, and management is directed toward maintaining a stable or relatively non-changing vegetation type.

About 70 percent of the national grasslands is open prairie; the rest is wooded. Most of the wooded areas are in small clumps on the prairie and along the numerous small streams and drainages.

Cottontail rabbits, doves, wild turkeys and bobwhite quail are found throughout the grasslands and are usually hunted in the prairies or along the edge of the woods. Fox squirrels can be found in the woods adjacent to creeks and drainages. Gray squirrels live in some of the bottomland hardwoods of the Caddo National Grasslands.

### Baiting

Baiting and hunting over baited areas to attract wildlife is not allowed in the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas.



### How to Recognize National Forest Land

Maps commonly show proclaimed national forest boundaries. However, all land within this boundary is not national forest land; some is privately owned. The land shown in green on the maps indicate national forest land.

Red paint and signs mark the boundaries between national forest land and private property. Recognition of these markings and boundary signs helps the visitor to be certain to stay on national forest land.

Visitors should comply with state law and the owner's rules when entering private land.

**Entrance (portal) signs.** These signs can be seen along major roads entering the national forests, usually on the first tract of government land encountered. Generally, portal signs are not used on low traffic roads.

**Welcome signs.** These signs are located on or just inside the boundaries or individual tracts of national forest land where the road enters. The sign will be oriented so that the land behind the sign is public land. Generally, they are not used on dead-end or woods roads or on small blocks of public land.

Upon entering woods on public land, welcome signs will not be present and the visitor should rely on property line markings and boundary signs.

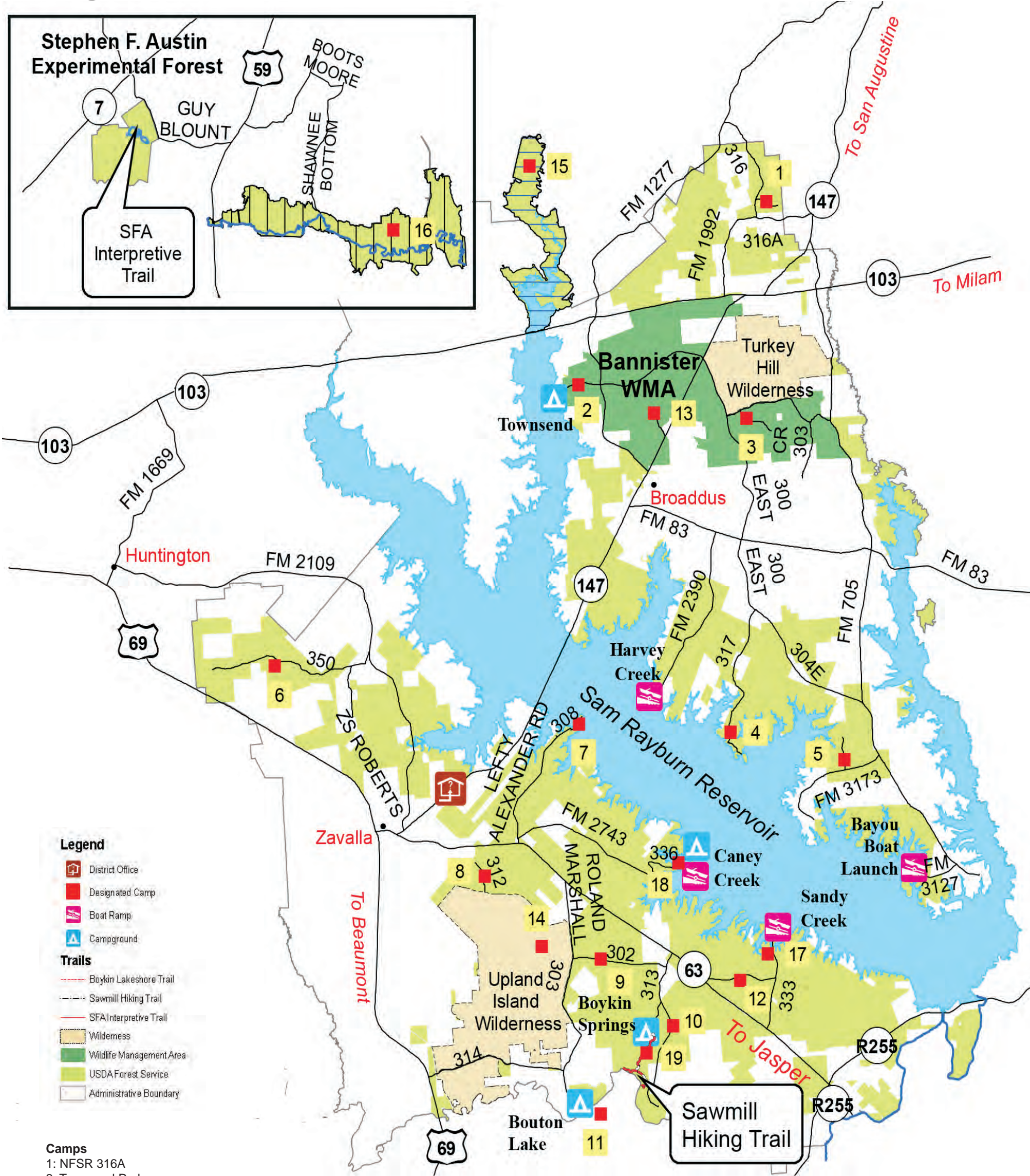
**Property line marking and boundary signs.** The boundaries of individual national forest tracts adjacent to other ownerships are marked with brown and yellow property boundary signs.

The small metal boundary signs are fastened either to trees or posts located on the boundary line and at road crossings, and the signs are placed so that public land is behind the sign. Red paint spots on trees define the boundary line through woods.

While the majority of boundaries are identified and posted, occasionally visitors may encounter an area where signs have been vandalized or lines are not marked. In these cases, visitors should be alert to avoid accidentally trespassing on private land.



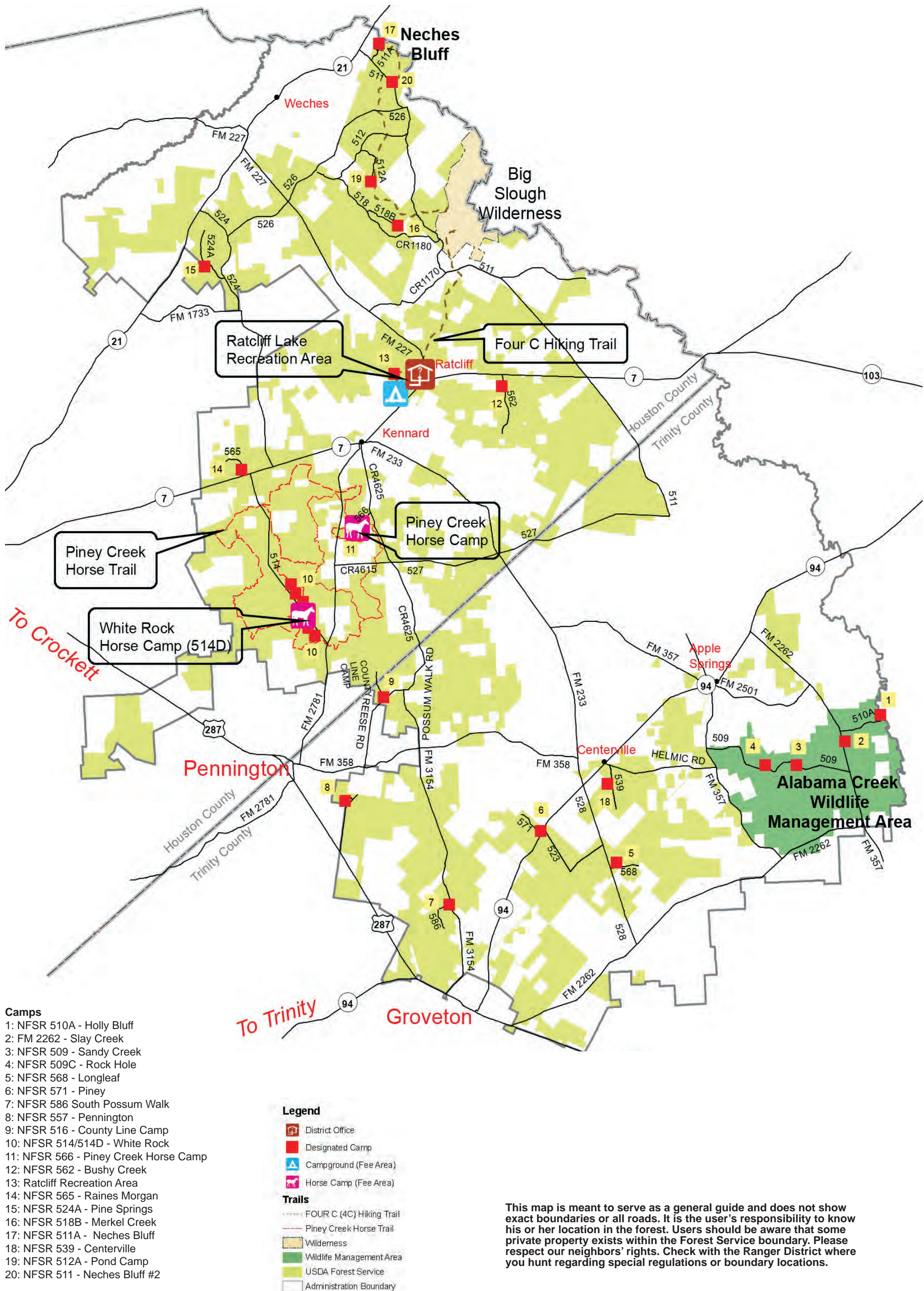
# Angelina National Forest



This map is meant to serve as a general guide and does not show exact boundaries or all roads. It is the user's responsibility to know his or her location in the forest. Users should be aware that some private property exists within the Forest Service boundary. Please respect our neighbors' rights. Check with the Ranger District where you hunt regarding special regulations or boundary locations.

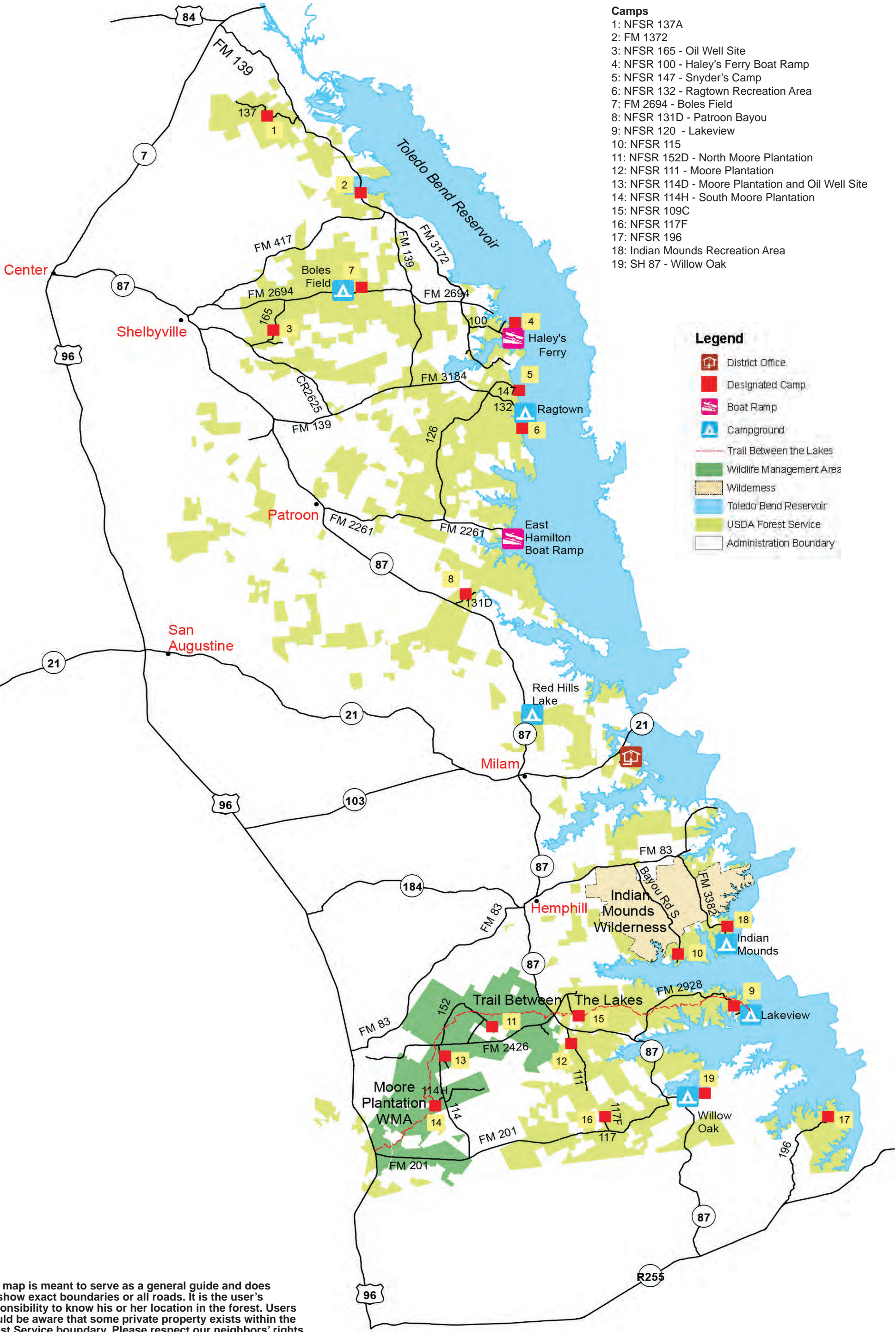


# Davy Crockett National Forest





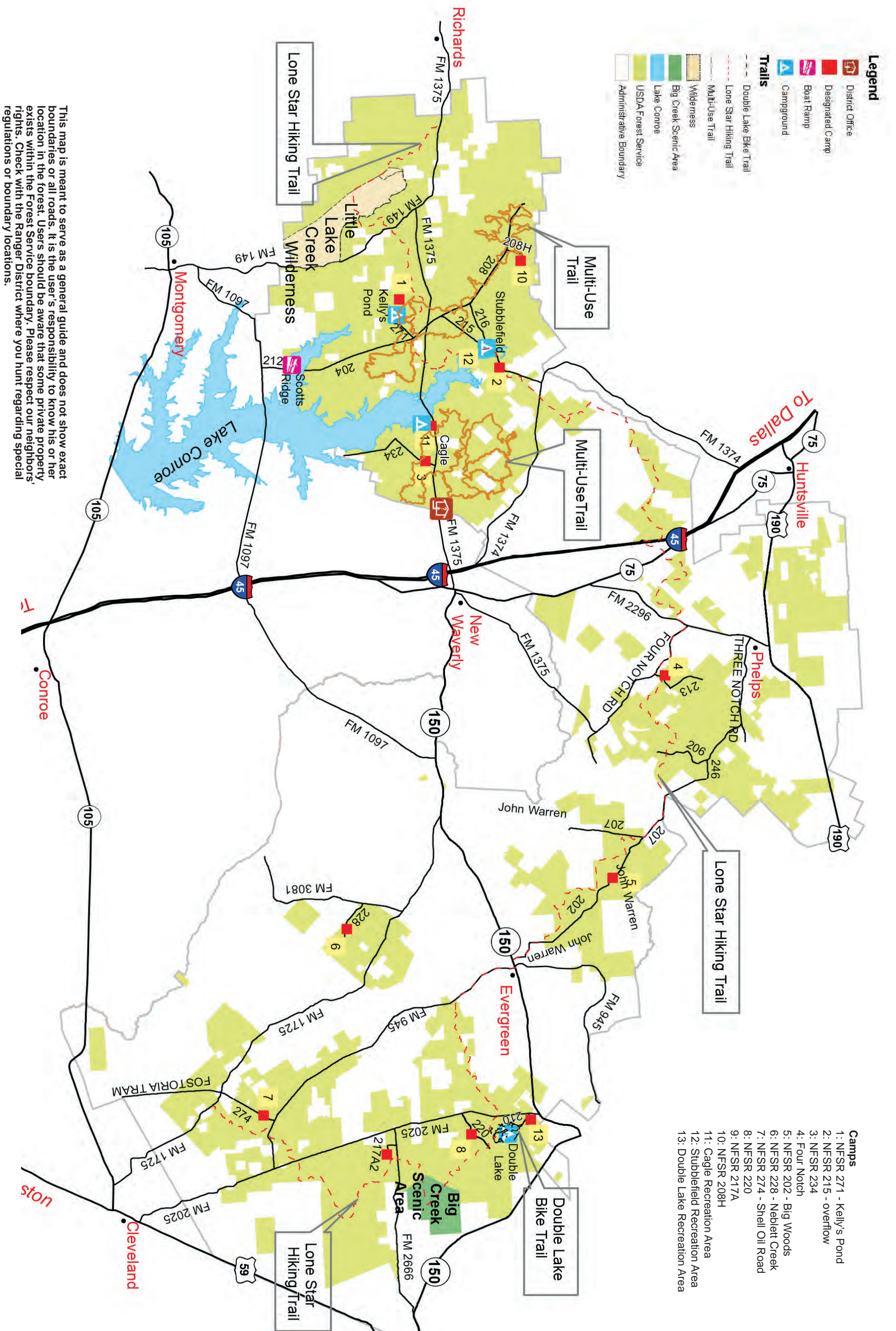
# Sabine National Forest



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# Sam Houston National Forest









## Contact Us

[www.fs.usda.gov/texas](http://www.fs.usda.gov/texas)



Angelina  
National Forest  
111 Walnut Ridge Road  
Zavalla, TX 75980  
936-897-1068



Davy Crockett  
National Forest  
18551 Hwy 7 East  
Kennard, TX 75847  
936-655-2299



Sabine  
National Forest  
5050 Hwy 21 East  
Hemphill, TX 75948  
409-625-1940  
Toll Free 866-235-1750



Sam Houston  
National Forest  
394 FM 1375 West  
New Waverly, TX 77358  
936-344-6205  
Toll Free 888-361-6908



Caddo/LBJ  
National Grasslands  
1400 US 81/287  
P.O. Box 507  
Decatur, TX 76234  
940-627-5475



Forest Supervisor's  
Office  
National Forests &  
Grasslands in Texas  
2221 North Raguet St.  
Lufkin, TX 75904  
936-639-8501  
For TTY: call 711 to be  
connected to a Forest  
Service number



Sam Rayburn Reservoir  
U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Route 3, Box 486  
Jasper, TX 75951  
409-384-5716



Toledo Bend Reservoir  
Sabine River Authority  
Route 1, Box 270  
Burkeville, TX 75932  
409-565-2273



**Texas Parks & Wildlife  
Department**  
Antlerless Deer  
Permit Questions  
936-569-8547

District Office  
Rt. 2 Box 535  
Jasper, TX 75951  
409-384-9572

District Office  
2122 Old Henderson Hwy.  
Tyler, TX 75702  
903-593-5077



## Watch Out for Falling Trees

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## Safety Notice

All hunters and those accompanying them must wear daylight fluorescent orange at any time when hunting, except when hunting turkey or migratory birds.

A minimum of 400 square inches of fluorescent orange must be visible (144 square inches on both the chest and back, and a daylight fluorescent orange cap or hat.)

All camping in the Angelina, Davy Crockett, Sabine or Sam Houston National Forest or the Caddo National Grasslands must be in designated campsites or developed recreation areas from Sept. 15 through Feb. 1.

Hunters using the wildlife management areas (WMAs) are required to have the \$48 annual hunting permit to hunt deer, turkey, small game, waterfowl and feral hogs.

"It's the hunter's responsibility to know the regulations and game limits while hunting in national forests and grasslands," said Chris Crain, U.S. Forest Service patrol captain. "Hunters should check bag limits for the county where they are hunting and refer to this year's hunting booklets for information to avoid citations. No baiting for wildlife or hunting over baited areas is allowed on the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas."

Portable deer stands are allowed in national forests and grasslands and are limited to 72 hours in one location. To prevent damage to trees, the stands must not be nailed to trees. When hunters fail to remove their deer stands, it causes damage to forest land and creates an expensive, time-consuming cleanup.

Vehicles should not be parked near gates or in areas that would impede traffic and block roads.

For additional information on this year's hunting season, please contact the Forest Service District Ranger offices.

Hunters may also visit the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas website at [www.fs.fed.usda.gov/texas](http://www.fs.fed.usda.gov/texas) and review information under the "Hunting 2012-2013" link.

## Wildlife Management Areas

Five Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are designated in the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Hunting is allowed in WMAs but the rules and regulations are slightly different and hunters must have the appropriate hunting permit from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department or any location that sells state hunting license. Be aware of boundaries.

The WMAs are:

<b>Angelina National Forest</b>	
Bannister	25,658 acres
<b>Davy Crockett National Forest</b>	
Alabama Creek	14,561 acres
<b>Sabine National Forest</b>	
Moore Plantation	26,455 acres
<b>Caddo National Grassland</b>	
Caddo	16,150 acres
<b>Sam Houston National Forest</b>	
Sam Houston	162,984 acres



## Off-Highway Vehicles

Off-highway vehicles are only allowed on designated trails.

The Sam Houston National Forest has the only designated OHV trail.

Specific information, regulations, permit application instructions and maps of Wildlife Management Areas are available from the U.S. Forest Service or the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Registration and information stations are located at major access points to the areas.



## Wilderness Areas

Wilderness areas are managed to protect their character and provide great opportunities for hunting, camping, fishing, hiking and other recreational activities. All roads in wilderness areas are closed and motorized and mechanized equipment is prohibited.

The five wilderness areas in the National Forests in Texas are:

<b>Angelina National Forest</b>	
Turkey Hill	5,473 acres
Upland Island	13,331 acres
<b>Davy Crockett National Forest</b>	
Big Slough	3,639 acres
<b>Sabine National Forest</b>	
Indian Mounds	12,369 acres
<b>Sam Houston National Forest</b>	
Little Lake Creek	3,855 acres

## Know the Rules

The regulations for legal species, weapons, season dates and bag limits are issued by the State of Texas on a county-by-county basis.

Regulation booklets are available where hunting licenses are sold and at Texas Parks and Wildlife Department offices.

The rules in this guide are general in scope. More detailed, local rules and regulations may be obtained from the district ranger's office.

## Target Practice

It is legal to target shoot in the general forest, with the exception of the Caddo-LBJ National Grasslands, as long as you do not shoot from, down, or across a road; you have a sufficient backstop (not a live tree); and pick up your trash (targets, empty shells, etc.) when you leave. Target shooting is prohibited in the Wildlife Management Areas on all units of the NFGT: Angelina NF, Davy Crockett NF, Sabine NF, Sam Houston NF, Caddo-LBJ NG.

## Camping

Developed recreation areas offer conveniences such as showers, restrooms and picnic facilities. Primitive camping is allowed except in designated scenic areas or where otherwise prohibited.

During hunting season, camping is permitted only in designated hunter camps or in developed recreation areas.

Camping in the national forests and grasslands is limited to 14 days during a 30-day time period.

Contact ranger offices for more information on camp locations.

## Maps

Maps and general information about the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas can be obtained from ranger offices or the forest supervisor's office.

Order forms are available on the Web at: [www.fs.usda.gov/texas](http://www.fs.usda.gov/texas) and click on the maps link.

Or call 936-639-8501 for information.

## Snakes and Insects

Copperhead, Canebrake rattlesnake, Cottonmouth, Coral and Pigmy rattlesnake are poisonous snakes native to this area. Insect repellant is recommended to protect against mosquitoes, ticks and chiggers.

## Leave No Trace

When you leave your camp, please be courteous and take your trash with you.

The Leave No Trace principles are:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

For more information on Leave No Trace, visit <https://int.org/>

## Frequently Asked Questions

For more information on hunting in Texas, visit

[www.fs.usda.gov/goto/texas/hunting-faq](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/texas/hunting-faq) where you will find answers to frequently asked questions.

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